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TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4584
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHINGTON DC 0053
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RHMFIUU/FBI WASHINGTON DC 0094
INFO RUEHEG/AMEMBASSY CAIRO 0469
RUEHDL/AMEMBASSY DUBLIN 0013
RUEHKM/AMEMBASSY KAMPALA 0114
RUEHDS/AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA 0262

UNCLAS KHARTOUM 001173

SENSITIVE
SIPDIS

DEPT FOR S/USSES, AF, EUR, M, DS, S/ES-O/CMS, INR, AND CA
NSC FOR MGAVIN, LETIM
DEPT PLS PASS USAID FOR AFR/SUDAN
ADDIS ABABA ALSO FOR USAU
CAIRO FOR LEGATT

POSTS FOR RSO, POL, AND LEGAT

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [ASEC](#) [PTER](#) [PGOV](#) [CASC](#) [SU](#)

SUBJECT: IRISH NGO AID WORKERS FREED IN DARFUR; TWO UN HOSTAGES
STILL HELD IN CAPTIVITY

REF: A) Khartoum 1040; 09/10/09
B) Khartoum 1024; 09/04/09
C) Khartoum 994; 08/30/09
D) Khartoum 894; 08/04/09

1. (SBU) SUMMARY: Sudanese authorities confirmed that two female aid workers who work for GOAL, an Irish non-governmental organization (NGO), were released early Sunday morning, October 18, after being held captive for 108 days. The two hostages, Irish national Sharon Cummins and Ugandan citizen Hilda Kawuki, were kidnapped on July 3 when armed gunmen invaded the GOAL compound in Kutum, North Darfur. The Government of Sudan (GOS) informed the Embassy privately, and stated publicly, that no ransom was paid for their release. United Nations Department of Safety and Security (UNDSS) officers did not have any additional details, but reported the negotiated release of the GOAL hostages has not affected the status or conditions for two UNAMID civilian employees held captive since the August 30 armed invasion of their compound in Zalingei, West Darfur. END SUMMARY.

2. (SBU) Sudan's State Minister for Humanitarian Affairs, Abdel Baqi Al Jalani announced that GOAL aid workers, Irish national Sharon Cummins and Ugandan citizen Hilda Kawuki, had been released by their captors in the early morning hours on October 18. The two were kidnapped on July 3 when armed gunmen invaded the GOAL compound in Kutum, North Darfur. Al Jalani had been the chief negotiator for the Government of Sudan since the ordeal began 108 days ago. Al Jalani is expected to represent GOS at an Khartoum airport press conference with the hostages as soon as they arrive on October 18.

3. (SBU) The Irish Honorary Consul informed the DCM that the two women were tired but appeared to be in good condition. The hostages were due to be returned in a private aircraft to Khartoum later in the day on October 18. He stated no ransom had been paid for the hostages' release. The DCM reaffirmed the Embassy's past offer of medical assistance if needed.

4. (SBU) Senior Presidential Advisor Dr. Ghazi Salah Edeen told the CDA that those responsible for the release were actually tribal leaders of those who organized the kidnapping. He said GOS had made it clear to the tribal leaders that this act would not go unpunished if it were not resolved. The tribal leaders subsequently leaned on the kidnappers to let the women go. Ghazi confirmed previous

reports from Al Jalani and the Irish that no ransom was paid.

¶5. (SBU) United Nations-African Union Mission in Darfur (UNAMID) contacts informed the RSO that the negotiations for the release of the GOAL hostages has not had any impact on the status of the two UN civilian employees who were also kidnapped during an armed invasion of their compound in Zalingei, West Darfur on August 30. According to a report provided to the RSO by a UN contact, the March 11 kidnapping of three Medecins Sans Frontiers (MSF) western expatriate workers, the April 4 kidnapping of a Canadian and French Assistance Medicale International (AMI) staff, and the July 3 GOAL kidnapping were all carried out by members of the Mahamid tribe, whereas the August 30 UN kidnappers allegedly are members of the Iraygat tribe. The UN report indicates that both the Mahamid and Iraygat belong to the broad, "Northern Rizaygat" tribe.

¶6. (SBU) Post will continue to monitor the status of the UNAMID hostage taking incident and will follow-up with the Irish and Ugandans for any information gathered from the two hostages just released. Updates will be sent via septel.

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